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ABSTRACT

It has been suggested that gender roles are multidimensional. However, past research has focused primarily on masculinity and femininity. This study investigated the relations among sex typing, sex, and interest in leisure activities among college students. College students (N=273) rated the extent of their interest in activities on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Participants also completed the Bem Sex Role Inventory and the Gough Femininity Scale. Significant differences were found for 18 activities. Significant predictors were found for 67 activities. For activities where differences were found, androgynous individuals consistently had the highest means. Results suggest that gender is a better predictor of interest than are gender roles. These data suggest that leisure activities do not fall neatly into instrumental or expressive categories. Most of the interests were more closely related to androgyny. Because interest in activities was more closely related to gender than to gender role, an individual's interests may have more to do with social role prescriptions for men and women than with masculinity and femininty. (ABL)

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THE SEX TYPING OF ACTIVITIES

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SUMMARY: This study investigated the relations among sex typing, sex, and interest in leisure activities among college students. Results show that sex is a better predictor of activity preference than instrumentality or expressivity. Additionally, androgynous individuals report greater interest in many activities when compared to masculine, feminine or undifferentiated individuals.

PROBLEM: Huston (1983) suggested that gender roles are multidimensional. However, past research has focused primarily on masculinity and femininity. This project investigated the relations among sex, gender-role characteristics and leisure activities among college students. Few recent studies have considered sex differences in interest in leisure activities. Those that have (Gentry & Doering, 1979; Gruber, 1980; White & Gruber 1985) included only a limited number of activities and did not provide the data necessary to evaluate their relations to instrumental and expressive characteristics.

PROCEDURE: Initially, male and female students were asked to list the 10 activities they most enjoyed when spending leisure time. A master list of activities was compiled. An independent sample of 273 introductory psychology students were provided with a copy of the 76-item master list and were asked to rate the extent of their interest in each activity on a 5-point Likert-type scale. These items are listed in Table 1. Participants also completed the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981) and the Gough Femininity Scale (Fe Scale; Gough, 1952). These scales provide conceptually different assessments of sex-typing. The

BSRI is based on the androgynous conception whereas the Fe Scale is based on the bipolar conception. Analyses evaluated the extent to which sex, BSRI scores and Fe Scale scores were significant predictors of interest in leisure activities.

RESULTS: Using a series of t-tests, significant sex differences in interest were found for 18 activities. Table 2 displays means and standard deviations for these items. Multiple regression analyses were used to determine the extent to which interest in each of the 76 activities could be predicted by participant's sex, BSRI scores and Fe Scale score. Beta weights and significance levels are presented in Table 3. Significant predictors were found for 67 activities. Participant's sex was a better predictor of interest than BSRI scores. Fe Scale score was a significant predictor of 40 items. BSRI masculinity score was a significant predictor for 14 items whereas femininity score predicted interest in 24 items. With only one exception BSRI scores predicted different items. Using published medians (Bem, 1981), participants were classified as androgynous, masculine, feminine or undifferentiated based on BSRI scores. ANOVAs were used to test for significant differences in interest in each activity. These results are presented in Table 4. Significant differences were found for 37 items. For activities where differences were found, androgynous individuals consistently had the highest means.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS: Consistent with past research (Doering, 1979; Gruber, 1980), these results suggest that sex is a better predictor of interest than gender role. It is not surprising that Fe scale scores were often significant predictors since items were selected for this scale based on sex differences in interest. These data suggest that leisure activities do not fall neatly into instrumental or expressive categories. Most of the interests were more closely related to androgyny. However, Deaux (1984) has questioned the legitimacy of these categories. She has argued that the masculinity and feminity scales are additive rather than interactve, meaning that androgyny is not a unique state that contributes to our understanding of the relationship between gender-role constructs and other variables. Because interest in activities was more closely related to sex than to gender role, individual's interests may have more to do with social role prescriptions (Eagly, 1987) for men and women than with masculinity and femininity.

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Table 1: Activities and Interests of College Students

The following is a list of activities and interests that often occupy the leisure time of college students. On this scale of 1 to 5, please rate how often you engage in each behavior when you have leisure time. Please indicate a number on the line next to each one.

1----------2----------3----------4----------5
Never Usually Not Sometimes Usually Always
Almost Never But Infrequent Almost Always

_____ Drinking
_____ Jogging
_____ Relaxing
_____ Writing Poetry
_____ Playing Sports
_____ Reading Magazines
_____ Running
_____ Typing
_____ Talking on the Phone
_____ Partying with Friends
_____ Listening to Music
_____ Studying/Doing Homework
_____ Watching TV
_____ Playing a Musical Instrument
_____ Going to Concerts/Lectures
_____ Watching Sports
_____ Reading Newspapers
_____ Writing Letters
_____ Working Out/Exercising
_____ Swimming
_____ Bicycling
_____ Hunting
_____ Riding Motorcycles
_____ Playing Video/Computer Games
_____ Having Sex
_____ Painting Fingernails
_____ Reading Books
_____ Reorganizing Closets/Shelves
_____ Working on a Car
_____ Sewing
_____ Fishing
_____ Watching Movies
_____ Playing Board Games
_____ Cruising
_____ Writing
_____ Shopping
_____ Calling Home
_____ Enjoying Quiet Time When Roommate is Gone
_____ Being with Girlfriend/Boyfriend/Spouse

_____ Dancing
_____ Cooking
_____ Singing
_____ Sleeping
_____ Drawing
_____ Dating
_____ Studying Nature
_____ Playing with Pet(s)
_____ Making Things/Crafts
_____ Camping
_____ Visiting Friends
_____ Watching People
_____ Going Out for Fun
_____ Walking
_____ Playing Games
_____ Chewing Tobacco
_____ Baking
_____ Visiting Relatives
_____ Going Out for a Drive
_____ Going on a Picnic
_____ Taking Pictures
_____ Role Playing Games
_____ Cleaning
_____ Painting
_____ Playing Cards
_____ Going Outside
_____ Eating Out
_____ Playing Pool
_____ Knitting
_____ Hiking
_____ Thinking About Things
_____ Traveling
_____ Looking for Girls/Guys
_____ Laying Out in the Sun
_____ Daydreaming
_____ Horseback Riding
_____ Studying with Friends

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Activities on which males and females differed significantly

Activity	male X	Sd	female X	Sd	prob
Chewing Tobacco	1.51	(1.11)	1.02	(1.32)	.000
Drawing	2.39	(1.41)	2.11	(1.17)	.033
Enjoying Quiet Time When Roommate is Gone	3.51	(1.33)	4.11	(1.02)	.003
Fishing	2.34	(1.40)	1.70	(1.12)	.009
Going Out for Fun	4.09	(.90)	4.46	(.74)	.029
Having Sex	3.33	(1.14)	3.01	(1.45)	.000
Horseback Riding	1.92	(1.21)	2.74	(1.57)	.005
Hunting	2.35	(1.47)	1.21	(.64)	.000
Knitting	1.09	(.38)	1.22	(.55)	.000
Painting Fingernails	2.56	(1.33)	2.75	(1.31)	.000
Playing w/Pets	2.35	(2.88)	1.24	(1.53)	.023
Playing Video Games/ Computer Games	2.35	(1.29)	1.77	(1.02)	.008
Role Playing Games	2.11	(1.39)	1.94	(1.15)	.032
Sewing	1.27	(.68)	1.47	(.89)	.003
Talking on Phone	3.14	(1.17)	3.97	(.90)	.003
Typing	1.88	(.89)	2.27	(1.16)	.004
Visiting Friends	3.80	(.88)	4.36	(.74)	.036
Writing Poetry	1.50	(.95)	2.03	(1.27)	.001

Table 3: Beta and significance level for significant predictors of interest in activities

Activity	Fem	Mas	Sex	Gough
Poetry	.26(.00)		.14(.03)	.12(.05)
Reading Magazines	.19(.01)			.18(.00)
Talking on the Phone	.18(.01)		.34(.00)	.17(.00)
Writing Letters	.22(.00)		.38(.00)	.17(.00)
Bicycling	.26(.00)			
Dancing	.20(.00)		.29(.00)	
Cooking	.15(.04)			.16(.01)
Singing	.18(.01)		.20(.00)	
Making Things	.16(.03)			.13(.02)
Visiting Friends	.24(.00)		.25(.00)	
Walking	.19(.01)		.33(.00)	.13(.02)
Baking	.20(.01)		.22(.00)	.14(.02)
Visiting Relatives	.22(.00)		.12(.05)	.19(.00)
Going for a Drive	.14(.05)			.22(.00)
Going on a Picnic	.22(.00)		.26(.00)	.13(.02)
Sewing	.16(.04)			
Calling Home	.14(.04)		.25(.00)	.20(.00)
Being w/Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Spouse	.21(.01)			
Painting	.14(.05)			.12(.04)
Thinking About Things	.23(.00)			.12(.04)
Traveling	.17(.02)			.15(.01)
Daydreaming	.16(.02)		.20(.00)	.27(.00)
Hunting	.22(.00)	.19(.00)	-.41(.00)	
Playing Sports		.17(.02)	-.24(.00)	.13(.03)
Typing		.25(.00)		
Concerts		.15(.03)		.18(.00)
Dating		.26(.00)		
Riding Motorcycles		.15(.03)	-.16(.01)	
Cruising		.16(.03)		.16(.01)
Writing		.18(.01)	.18(.00)	.12(.04)
Going Outside		.17(.02)	.12(.04)	.16(.01)
Eating out		.19(.01)	.12(.04)	
Cooking for Girls/Guys		.20(.01)		
Laying Out in the Sun		.18(.01)	.27(.00)	.11(.05)
Shopping		.15(.01)	.52(.00)	
Going Out for Fun			.18(.00)	
Chewing Tobacco			.49(.00)	
Taking Pictures			.26(.00)	
Playing Video/Computer Games			-.24(.00)	
Having Sex			-.28(.00)	
Painting Fingernails			.61(.00)	
Reading Books			.20(.00)	
Working on Car			-.55(.00)	
Fishing			-.23(.00)	
Playing Cards			-.12(.05)	
Playing Pool			-.31(.00)	
Horseback Riding			.25(.00)	
Studying			.16(.01)	
Playing Musical Inst.			.15(.03)	
Reorganizing Closets/Shelves			.24(.00)	.20(.00)
Enjoying Quiet Time When Roommate Gone			.22(.00)	.23(.00)
Watching Sports			-.25(.00)	.12(.03)
Drawing			-.13(.04)	.19(.00)
Playing w/Pets			.14(.02)	.12(.05)
Watching People			.16(.00)	.19(.00)
Studying w/Friends			.24(.00)	.13(.03)
Jogging				.12(.05)
Listening to Music				.14(.02)
Reading Newspapers				.19(.00)
Working Out				.15(.01)
Swimming				.13(.02)
Sleeping				.16(.00)
Studying Nature				.12(.04)
Playing Games				.14(.02)
Watching Movies				.12(.04)
Role Playing Games				.16(.01)
Cleaning				.19(.00)

Table 4: Means for Interest In Activities by Sex Typed Category

ANDROGYNOUS ACTIVITIES

	AND	FEM	MAS	UND	F	P
Reading Magazines	3.50^{F,U}	3.02	3.12	3.14	2.71	.04
Listening to Music	4.73^{F}	4.42	4.45	4.53	4.42	.00
Play Music Inst.	2.15^{U}	1.75	1.67	1.53	4.09	.01
Reading Newspapers	3.38^{F}	2.83	3.15	3.22	3.30	.02
Writing Letters	3.44^{M,U}	3.19	2.82	2.90	4.38	.00
Working Out/Exercising	3.62^{F,U}	3.0	3.33	3.10	4.64	.00
Bicycling	2.71^{M}	2.52^{U}	2.10	2.37	2.58	.05
Dancing	3.42^{U}	3.33^{U}	2.92	2.51	5.68	.00
Cooking	2.83^{U}	2.54	2.28	2.33	3.53	.02
Sleeping	4.04^{F,M,U}	3.79	3.77	3.57	3.88	.01
Dating	4.23^{U}	3.54	3.77	3.45	8.27	.00
Playing w/Pet(s)	2.92^{F,M,U}	2.65	2.56	2.18	3.29	.02
Visiting Friends	4.36^{M,U}	4.06	3.92	3.84	6.88	.00
Going Out for Fun	4.49^{M,U}	4.25^{M,U}	4.13	4.08	4.33	.00
Walking	3.64^{M,U}	3.62^{M,U}	3.10	2.92	5.65	.00
Baking	2.49^{U}	2.27^{U}	1.74	1.86	5.69	.00
Visiting Relatives	3.26	3.08	2.74	2.51	5.50	.00
Going for Drive	3.59^{M,U}	3.21^{M,U}	3.10	3.12	3.08	.03
Picnic	3.11^{M,U}	3.08^{M,U}	2.18	2.24	8.37	.00
Taking Pictures	3.02^{M,U}	2.63^{M}	2.49	2.50	2.94	.03
Painting Fingernails	2.35	2.21	1.54	1.76	5.39	.00
Reorganizing Closet/ Shelves	2.60^{M,U}	2.50	2.05	2.04	4.67	.00
Shopping	3.74^{M,U}	3.42	3.08	3.06	4.83	.00
Quiet Time	4.08^{U}	3.72^{M,U}	3.87	3.56	2.80	.04
Being w/signif other	4.41^{M,U}	4.36^{M,U}	3.87	3.59	7.58	.00
Going Outside	3.90^{U}	3.62	3.62	3.31	4.08	.01
Eating Out	3.86^{F,M,U}	3.46	3.39	3.31	3.77	.01
Thinking about Things	4.20^{M,U}	4.02	3.72	3.82	3.78	.01
Traveling	3.46^{U}	3.23	2.82^{F}	2.86	3.39	.02
Looking for Girls/Guys	3.51^{F,M,U}	3.00	3.90	3.33	3.38	.02
Laying Out in the Sun	3.69^{U}	2.96	3.10	2.96	5.92	.00
Daydreaming	3.87	3.64	3.59	3.24	4.11	.01

FEMININE ACTIVITIES

	AND	FEM	MAS	UND	F	P
Talking On Phone	3.82^{M,U}	3.85^{M,U}	3.31	3.04	8.24	.00
Singing	2.66^{M,U}	2.69^{U}	1.97	1.98	5.08	.00

MASCULINE ACTIVITIES

	AND	FEM	MAS	UND	F	P
Hunting	1.50	1.33	2.33^{A,F,U}	1.77	6.95	.00
Working on Car	1.72	1.46	2.13^{F}	1.84	2.62	.05

UNDIFFERENTIATED ACTIVITIES

	AND	FEM	MAS	UND	F	P
Chewing Tobacco	1.14	1.08	1.23	1.47^{A,F}	3.07	.03

A = significantly different from Androgynous mean at .05
F = significantly different from Feminine mean at .05
M = significantly different from Masculine mean at .05
U = significantly different from Undifferentiated mean at .05